1	IN THE UNITED STATE		
2	FOR THE EASTERN DISTRI 	- CT OF PENNSYLVANIA	
3	LISA BARBOUNIS	: CIVIL ACTION NO.	
4	V.	: 19-cv-05030 :	
5	THE MIDDLE EAST FORUM, DANIEL	: :	
6	PIPES, individually, and GREG ROMAN, individually	: :	
7	and	: :	
8	DANIEL PIPES, THE MIDDLE EAST	: :	
9	FORUM and GREG ROMAN	: :	
10	V.	: MOTION HEARING	
11	LISA BARBOUNIS		
12	Jam	es A. Byrne U.S. Courthouse	
13	Via videoconference Philadelphia, PA 19106		
14	November 13, 2020 Commencing at 10:42 a.m.		
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16	BEFORE THE HONORABLE JOSHUA D. WOLSON		
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21	Ann Marie Mitchell, CRR, RDR, RMR Official Court Reporter		
22	(267) 29		
23	Proceedings taken stenographicall	wand prepared utilizing	
24	Proceedings taken stenographically and prepared utilizing computer-aided transcription		
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- 1 (Court called to order at 10:41 a.m.)
- 2 THE COURT: Good morning. So we are here on the
- 3 motion for contempt that was filed in this case in ECF Number
- 4 72.
- 5 So I've read that motion and the exhibits, and
- 6 obviously I'm familiar with the procedural history in this
- 7 case. You guys have been in front of me a number of times on
- 8 these matters.
- 9 Let me start with this: Mr. Carson, it doesn't look
- 10 to me like you filed a certification that I ordered; is that
- 11 right?
- MR. CARSON: No. I answered all the -- all the
- 13 document requests. I provided written responses to the
- 14 document requests. And I believe I sent over a certification
- 15 as well.
- 16 THE COURT: I haven't seen a certification on the
- 17 docket, Mr. Carson.
- MR. CARSON: Oh, filed a certification. I'm sorry.
- 19 THE COURT: Yes.
- MR. CARSON: I guess no, I have not done that.
- 21 THE COURT: You know that was one of the requirements,
- 22 right, that was in my order?
- MR. CARSON: I do.
- THE COURT: Okay. So why did that not happen?
- MR. CARSON: It's just an oversight, just an honest

- 1 oversight. I just didn't -- I just didn't --
- THE COURT: Okay.
- 3 Have the written discovery responses been served?
- 4 MR. CARSON: Yes.
- 5 THE COURT: Okay. And Mr. Walton, from your
- 6 perspective, I didn't have the sense from your motion that the
- 7 written responses were the primary issue here, but from your
- 8 perspective, are they complete, or there are there still issues
- 9 with the written responses?
- MR. WALTON: Two quick issues with the responses, Your
- 11 Honor.
- One, I believe Mr. Carson still asserted objections,
- 13 but I believe they were waived as per our last hearing.
- 14 And the responses indicate we received several hundred
- 15 thousand documents, which we haven't, and that all the
- 16 defendants received them at the same time, which we disagree
- 17 with.
- But other than that, it's the same boilerplate
- 19 response to every single one of the requests.
- 20 THE COURT: All right. The document count -- I mean,
- 21 the record will show however many documents were produced. I
- 22 assume they're being numbered somehow, so that doesn't trouble
- 23 me too much.
- Mr. Carson, to the extent you include objections in
- 25 the document request responses, are you standing on any

- 1 objections?
- 2 MR. CARSON: I mean, I'd have to look at them. I
- 3 didn't think I put a lot of objections in there. I thought the
- 4 only ones I'd probably -- I'd have to look at them, Your Honor,
- 5 to answer that question in a meaningful way.
- 6 THE COURT: I mean, I do think there's a waiver issue
- 7 here if you haven't responded for -- I mean, you responded on
- 8 November 2nd per my order to requests that were served in I
- 9 think January. So I think you've got a waiver issue if you're
- 10 standing on any objections.
- MR. CARSON: I mean, to the extent that there's a
- 12 waiver issue, I suggest it applies to both parties. You know,
- 13 I received my interrogatory -- responses to interrogatories and
- 14 document requests six months after I sent them or five months
- 15 after I sent them.
- THE COURT: Well, that's not the issue in front of me,
- 17 Mr. Carson. I don't have a motion about the interrogatory
- 18 responses.
- MR. CARSON: They agree. I guess what I'm saying is
- 20 that both parties were aware that each other's discovery
- 21 responses were late and agreed that we wouldn't make waiver
- 22 arguments. And I have emails from Mr. Walton to that effect.
- THE COURT: All right. Well, I mean, I guess I need
- 24 to know if there's anything you're standing on.
- MR. CARSON: It might not be an issue. You know what

- 1 I mean? Like --
- THE COURT: That's what I'm saying.
- 3 MR. CARSON: Yeah.
- 4 THE COURT: If you put the verbiage in for objections
- 5 and you're not standing on them, then it doesn't really matter
- 6 and I'm not going to wade into it. If there's objections that
- 7 you know you're standing on as a basis to withhold documents as
- 8 nonresponsive, then I think I need to know that.
- 9 MR. CARSON: Yeah. I haven't withheld any documents
- 10 based on -- that I'm aware of, based on -- based on objections.
- 11 THE COURT: Okay. All right. So Mr. Carson, where
- 12 does the document production stand at this point?
- MR. CARSON: As far as I know, every single document
- 14 has been produced. There are no documents that --
- THE COURT: That includes media files, it includes
- 16 audio recordings, it includes pictures, you've reviewed all
- 17 those and produced what's responsive?
- MR. CARSON: Yeah. I mean, I haven't reviewed every
- 19 picture out of the hundreds of thousands of pictures yet. But
- 20 yes, I mean, as far as I know, every single -- I mean, I
- 21 provided -- I mean, this is -- this would be a very easy
- 22 conversation to have if defendants had ever decided to contact
- 23 me one time to talk about any of this stuff.
- But I produced like 345 other documents, including an
- 25 audio file and images and -- you know, like, have I gotten

- 1 through the hundreds of thousands of documents that Cornerstone
- 2 gave us? No. But we both have all those documents.
- 3 THE COURT: So let me break that down.
- 4 You have given to the defendants all of those images?
- 5 Because I thought that what I had heard was that the images
- 6 were being held back so that you could look at them because
- 7 there was an issue of sensitivity.
- 8 MR. CARSON: Yeah. So since -- since Cornerstone did
- 9 that, I have not looked through every single one of those
- 10 images, but I don't think that -- you know what I mean? I
- 11 don't -- I don't think that there's anything there in addition
- 12 to what was already produced that's discoverable.
- 13 THE COURT: How do you know that if you haven't looked
- 14 at them?
- MR. CARSON: I mean, just because they're all just
- 16 family photos, Your Honor. It has nothing to do with this
- 17 case.
- 18 THE COURT: Well, there are representations in the
- 19 motion that Ms. Barbounis took pictures of documents when she
- 20 was at the The Forum. There are representations in the motion
- 21 that she recorded conversations while she was at work and
- 22 things like that.
- 23 So how do you know if those things are there if you
- 24 haven't reviewed them?
- MR. CARSON: I mean, I haven't come across anything

- 1 like that. Nothing. I haven't gotten through it all, so I
- 2 guess --
- 3 THE COURT: How much is there left for you to review?
- 4 MR. CARSON: I don't -- I don't know. I'd have to
- 5 look. I don't know. But --
- 6 THE COURT: So how am I supposed to know --
- 7 Mr. Carson, I mean, I issued an order that said you were
- 8 supposed to produce all remaining responsive documents by
- 9 November the 2nd.
- MR. CARSON: Right.
- THE COURT: Right. How am I supposed to know if you
- 12 did that?
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, it's just -- since -- since
- 14 you issued that order, I've had depositions like every day
- 15 since then. I get -- every chance I get, I try to go look
- 16 through that stuff.
- 17 I've never one time looking through it seen a picture
- 18 of a document or heard an audio file that in any way relates to
- 19 this case or The Middle East Forum in any way, but --
- THE COURT: Did Ms. Barbounis testify that she had
- 21 recorded some conversations during her work at the The Forum
- 22 during her deposition?
- MR. CARSON: I don't recall, but I don't think so. I
- 24 mean, I think those recordings have been turned over. The ones
- 25 that she testified about have been turned over.

- 1 THE COURT: Wait. Okay. So that's two different
- 2 answers to my question. So start with my question.
- 3 Did she testify that she recorded conversations during
- 4 her time at MEF?
- 5 MR. CARSON: There was testimony about a recording
- 6 between Ms. Barbounis and an employee named Marty Meyer, yes.
- 7 So -- and that recording has been turned over.
- 8 THE COURT: Was there testimony about recordings with
- 9 conversations with anyone else, like Mr. Roman?
- MR. CARSON: I don't recall that, but I don't think
- 11 so. I mean, if defendants -- if any counsel wants to correct
- 12 me on that, I just don't recall that. I don't think there was,
- 13 no, Your Honor.
- 14 THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Walton, what is the material
- 15 that you're still concerned about in the way of -- let's talk
- 16 about media files for a moment?
- MR. WALTON: Your Honor, I'll try to break these down,
- 18 because Cornerstone uses "media files" in a very broad sense.
- 19 Number one, there are documents that have been turned
- 20 over to us with attachments where the attachments aren't there.
- 21 A lot of those attachments are media files. So there's
- 22 potentially relevant documents without attachments, number one.
- Number two is the pictures of the documents and the
- 24 other photos that may be relevant to the case, not her family
- 25 and stuff, but her trips that she went on with MEF, her

- 1 relationship with Danny Thomas, Tommy Robinson, et cetera.
- 2 Number three is her recordings. She loved to record
- 3 things.
- 4 Mr. Gold can speak to this, but some of this stuff,
- 5 the reason we know it exists, it's been turned over to trade
- 6 secret case, which Mr. Gold is involved in, not us, not Cozen.
- 7 And so --
- 8 MR. CARSON: Turned over to who?
- 9 MR. WALTON: To -- I believe some of that was turned
- 10 over to Mr. Gold as part of the trade secret case, and then it
- 11 was pulled back when they found the censored materials.
- So we, Cozen, in the case before Your Honor have not
- 13 received those materials.
- 14 THE COURT: Okay. Let me drill down on each of those
- 15 categories then.
- So let's start with the documents with attachments.
- 17 Have you -- start with this.
- 18 Mr. Walton, have you identified for Mr. Carson the
- 19 documents with attachments that you've seen where you don't
- 20 have the attachments?
- MR. WALTON: No. I think we put some exemplars in our
- 22 motion, but there are numerous. Ms. Benson is on the phone --
- 23 or on the conference, she can speak to this better than I can,
- 24 but my understanding is there's thousands.
- 25 THE COURT: Okay. So who is segregating the files

- 1 from the -- from the attachments? In other words, is that
- 2 being done by Cornerstone, or is that something, Mr. Carson,
- 3 that you're doing?
- 4 MR. WALTON: It was being done, my understanding --
- 5 and I'm sorry if you didn't direct that at me, Your Honor. But
- 6 my understanding is that it's being done pursuant to Judge
- 7 Sanchez's order in the trade secret case. But Mr. Carson and
- 8 Mr. Gold can speak to that better than I can.
- 9 THE COURT: Mr. Carson, why don't you tell me.
- I mean, is the -- in the ordinary course of things in
- 11 discovery, I would expect you to maintain some sort of
- 12 relationship between the document and its attachment and its
- 13 production in order to be forensically sound.
- 14 So what's the basis for separating them?
- MR. CARSON: I'm not sure I understand what you mean.
- THE COURT: So if an email has an attachment,
- 17 Mr. Carson, you know, typically they are produced with either
- 18 some metadata to indicate the relationship, they're produced
- 19 together. I mean, I assume you're producing things here in
- 20 some sort of document review format, document review tool,
- 21 whether it's Relativity --
- MR. CARSON: No.
- THE COURT: You're producing stuff as PDFs?
- MR. CARSON: Yeah. I don't even know how we're doing
- 25 it. I have no idea.

- 1 THE COURT: What tool are you using to look at the
- 2 documents, Mr. Carson?
- 3 MR. CARSON: Whatever Cornerstone gave us.
- 4 THE COURT: What is it? When you log in, what program
- 5 is it?
- 6 MR. CARSON: I don't know. I don't know what it's
- 7 called.
- 8 MR. WALTON: It's called, Junto, Your Honor.
- 9 J-U-N-T-O.
- THE COURT: And is it a typical document review tool
- 11 with --
- MR. WALTON: Yeah. It's like Relativity Light.
- 13 THE COURT: Is there metadata associated with the
- 14 files?
- MR. WALTON: Yes.
- 16 THE COURT: Okay. So Mr. Carson, typically if you
- 17 produce a file that has an attachment, there's metadata that
- 18 indicates that and that maintains the relationships so they can
- 19 see that when they get it.
- 20 Are these things being separated? In other words, if
- 21 an email comes around and you tag the email from production,
- 22 does the attachment get tagged as well?
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, I have no idea. I don't
- 24 know.
- THE COURT: Don't you need to know that if you're

- 1 trying to fulfill your discovery obligations?
- 2 MR. CARSON: I'm not the one producing it.
- 3 Cornerstone produced it.
- 4 THE COURT: No. Mr. Carson, Cornerstone is generating
- 5 the document files.
- 6 MR. CARSON: But they're giving it to us both at the
- 7 same time. They have equal access to it.
- 8 THE COURT: I thought they don't have equal access to
- 9 some of these media files?
- MR. CARSON: I guess. I mean, some of the pictures,
- 11 the family photos and things like that, were held back,
- 12 because --
- THE COURT: Cornerstone didn't go through and figure
- 14 out which media files were family photos and which ones
- 15 weren't. Right?
- MR. CARSON: No, I don't think they did that.
- 17 THE COURT: So they just held back media files en
- 18 masse. Right?
- MR. CARSON: Right.
- 20 THE COURT: And if there was a media file attached to
- 21 an email, then it sounds to me like Cornerstone separated those
- 22 and maybe made the email available but held the attachment
- 23 back; is that right?
- MR. CARSON: I guess, if that's what Mr. Walton is
- 25 saying happened. I don't know, because I've never received a

- 1 single phone call from anyone who is representing defendants to
- 2 just talk to me about this and explain --
- 3 THE COURT: Mr. Carson, don't you need to know what
- 4 Cornerstone is doing if they're making a production of your
- 5 client's materials?
- 6 MR. CARSON: Sure, yeah, I do, but I was overruled in
- 7 that aspect, so...
- 8 THE COURT: What do you mean, you were overruled? You
- 9 were told you aren't allowed to have the information?
- 10 MR. CARSON: Yeah. I was told I wasn't allowed to
- 11 have the information first.
- 12 THE COURT: I'm not asking first.
- But don't you need to know what they're doing? I
- 14 mean, just to answer these questions, don't you need to know?
- MR. CARSON: Yeah. I mean, I have an idea what
- 16 they're doing. I've logged in and looked at it. I'm
- 17 100 percent certain I have not looked at everything they've
- 18 looked at, you know, because I don't have any kind of
- 19 e-discovery tools.
- THE COURT: That's not what I'm asking you,
- 21 Mr. Carson. I'm trying to understand what you're doing to
- 22 fulfill your discovery obligations.
- And again, I am not interested in what you were told
- 24 in the trade secret case. If you're leveraging the production
- 25 in the trade secret case to fulfill your discovery obligations

- 1 in this case, that's fine. That may be an efficient way to go
- 2 about it.
- But you've got your discovery obligations in this
- 4 case, and I need them to be fulfilled. And I don't know how
- 5 you can be fulfilling them if you don't know what's being
- 6 produced and, you know, you don't know what's -- you know, you
- 7 don't know what's being produced and you don't know what
- 8 methodology is being used.
- 9 MR. CARSON: Your Honor, I've said on the record, one
- 10 of the ways that Cornerstone produced information is in like
- 11 snippets.
- 12 So during depositions, you know, they'll put a text
- 13 message. It will be like one sentence, you know. There's no
- 14 context. And I've told defendants during every single
- 15 deposition that's taken place in this case so far, why don't
- 16 you guys call me when this deposition is over so we can discuss
- 17 trying to get some context for these text messages, you know.
- 18 And I was like, I'll agree to give you information from before
- 19 and after so we can see what's being spoken about here.
- 20 And I think this is relevant in the context of if
- 21 there's attachments that are part of these messages or
- 22 attachments that are part of these emails, I have no problem
- 23 turning those over so that we can understand what the
- 24 attachments are.
- But, you know what I mean, I don't know what

- 1 defendants are even talking about here.
- 2 And they've never called me to discuss it with me and
- 3 instead -- this is like the 80th, you know, contempt motion
- 4 they filed against me. Before any of these contempt motions,
- 5 they don't call and talk to me, because they're more interested
- 6 in -- you know, how am I supposed to produce discovery if
- 7 I'm -- all I'm ever doing is responding to contempt motions.
- 8 And by the way, that's the point. That's the point of
- 9 what they're doing, so --
- THE COURT: Mr. Carson, first of all, let's set the
- 11 hyperbole aside, okay, because it's the second time they've
- 12 come to me on contempt, not the 80th.
- MR. CARSON: If you add them all together, Your Honor,
- 14 in all the cases, it's probably the 15th.
- THE COURT: I'm not interested in the other cases,
- 16 Mr. Carson. I told you that last time.
- 17 MR. CARSON: Okay.
- 18 THE COURT: Okay? You guys collectively made a
- 19 decision not to seek to consolidate these cases. Right? We
- 20 talked about this in January when you were here for the
- 21 Rule 16. And it was apparent then that there were a whole
- 22 bunch of these, that there was going to be a lot of overlap.
- 23 You chose to file them separately. You didn't mark them as
- 24 related or file them as a single action, Mr. Carson. And the
- 25 fact that, you know -- and I've pointed this out to Mr. Walton

- 1 and Mr. Gold too. They also made a decision not to move to
- 2 consolidate. So that has consequences for everybody. But one
- 3 of those consequences is that you've got a whole bunch of cases
- 4 running in parallel with independently existing discovery
- 5 obligations. Okay?
- 6 So in my case that's in front of me, I have discovery
- 7 obligations. I'm not interested in what's going on in the
- 8 other cases. I'm interested in this case and in moving this
- 9 case forward.
- And I'm not getting clarity here. And I'm not getting
- 11 clarity on what exactly has been produced. I'm not getting
- 12 clarity on what the methodology was. And I don't know whether
- 13 you're in compliance with my order or not. It sounds like the
- 14 answer is no, because there's no doubt that you haven't looked
- 15 at and produced everything, but I don't know.
- I mean, I guess it's possible that in amongst those
- 17 files there's nothing responsive. Right?
- But the problem is, you can't tell me that. And you
- 19 can't file the certification of compliance that I ordered on --
- 20 in October. You know, I ordered it on October 26th that you
- 21 were supposed to do it by November 2nd. And you can't do that
- 22 because you're not in compliance, or at least you don't know
- 23 you're in compliance. Maybe you are by blind luck, but you
- 24 don't know that you are.
- MR. CARSON: I think that's right.

- 1 THE COURT: And so the question is, you know, I need
- 2 you to get this done. I thought I made this pretty clear when
- 3 we were on the phone three weeks ago or on the Zoom call three
- 4 weeks ago that this case needs to come to a close. Discovery
- 5 in this case needs to come to a close. And the only way to do
- 6 that was to get the documents out of the door so that these
- 7 depositions could take place. And so I don't know where we
- 8 stand.
- 9 MR. CARSON: I guess I thought I was in compliance,
- 10 Your Honor, and that if I wasn't, I think that there should be
- 11 some sort of opportunity -- you know, if defendants are
- 12 suggesting that there's stuff they still need that they think I
- 13 can get to them, then a simple discussion about that would
- 14 probably -- and then a call to Cornerstone would probably
- 15 facilitate that.
- 16 THE COURT: All right.
- Mr. Walton, we -- I talked about the documents with
- 18 the attachments. There's pictures and other photos and things
- 19 like that.
- Are you suggesting those things exist sort of as
- 21 standalone documents independently from being attachments, or
- 22 are you just saying those are the type of things that are
- 23 attachments? Because that is the second category I wrote down
- 24 when you --
- MR. WALTON: If I'm following, Your Honor, and I

- 1 apologize if I'm not, I think it's a little bit of both. It's
- 2 mostly attachments to documents and some standalone recordings
- 3 and stuff.
- 4 THE COURT: Are the recordings standalone things or
- 5 are they attachments that Ms. Barbounis sent along as well?
- 6 MR. WALTON: I believe they're mostly attachments.
- 7 THE COURT: And what was her testimony with respect to
- 8 the recordings, Mr. Walton? Was it that she recorded
- 9 conversations on a regular basis or that there were a few that
- 10 she had recorded?
- MR. WALTON: I didn't attend her deposition. Mr.
- 12 Cavalier and Mr. Gold did. We don't have a transcript yet. My
- 13 understanding is that she admitted to one or two conversations
- 14 but that the evidence that we have shows that there are likely
- 15 many, many more.
- 16 THE COURT: And what is that evidence?
- 17 MR. WALTON: That evidence is evidence from other
- 18 witnesses about recordings. It could have been some of the
- 19 stuff that was turned over in the trade secret case that Cozen
- 20 doesn't have access to yet. And, you know, testimony and
- 21 memory from Greg Roman and other people that we have.
- 22 THE COURT: Let me ask, is there a reason why --
- 23 Mr. Carson and Mr. Gold, maybe you know this from your role in
- 24 the trade secret case -- why whatever's been produced in the
- 25 trade secret case can't be made available to Cozen in this

- 1 case?
- 2 MR. GOLD: I think there was a confidentiality order
- 3 entered in that case. I'm not sure, Your Honor. But my
- 4 understanding is the order only allows counsel of record in the
- 5 trade secret case to have access to the files and documents and
- 6 data that's on the Junto platform.
- However, just so I can add, the trade secret case, the
- 8 search terms that were used were limited to -- I believe there
- 9 were 25 search terms, but they're all limited to the trade
- 10 secret case. So information that was made available to us
- 11 through discovery, and that's on the Junto platform, probably
- 12 none of that -- a portion of that may be related to this case.
- However, as I understand it -- I don't know whether
- 14 any search terms were ever provided in this case, but that
- 15 information is readily available to Mr. Carson. He is counsel
- 16 of record. All he has to do is go on the platform, enter his
- 17 password, and he's on there. He can search documents. He can
- 18 do whatever he needs with regard to that.
- But that discovery is not in any way, shape or form
- 20 related to this case in the sense that it limits the
- 21 information that we need in this -- in the employment case.
- 22 THE COURT: I understand that. But I mean, if it's
- 23 been supplemental to what's been produced in this case and it's
- 24 part of what's out there, then I'm just trying to figure out if
- 25 there's a way to move things along.

- 1 You know, look, there's no search terms in this case.
- 2 You know, some of that is a function of the delays, you know,
- 3 the defendants engaged in too in terms of pursuing discovery in
- 4 this case. And we're not just going to reset things --
- 5 MR. GOLD: Right.
- 6 THE COURT: -- and give everybody a pass.
- 7 MR. GOLD: Your Honor, by the way, the data or the
- 8 files available on the trade secret case have been available
- 9 now for months. And the reason that we had difficulties with
- 10 that, 'cause we had -- because of interactions we had with
- 11 Mr. Carson. But I'm not going to go into that.
- But the platform that we're using is relatively easy,
- 13 I mean, to use. I'm not by any means an expert in the database
- 14 programs, but I'll tell you, I've been able to use it. I've
- 15 been able to search for terms. And Mr. Carson has total access
- 16 to that.
- 17 What he's complaining about is that at some point in
- 18 time, Judge Sanchez lost his patience and said, okay, just turn
- 19 everything over to Cornerstone. And some of that is identified
- 20 as attorneys' eyes only. Some of it is anyone can access it.
- 21 But he's had access now for months. I mean, it's all there.
- But I think what Mr. Walton is stating in this case is
- 23 that the documents that are related to this case have not been
- 24 turned over, and the documents in the trade secret case are not
- 25 a substitute for what needs to be turned over in this case. I

- 1 don't expect -- we have hundreds of thousands of documents that
- 2 have been -- that are on the platform right now because of the
- 3 search terms we used.
- 4 But the cases have no relationship to each other in
- 5 terms of the factual issues or the legal issues.
- 6 MR. CARSON: The parties are the same.
- 7 THE COURT: All right. Yeah. I have a couple of
- 8 questions.
- 9 I mean, one of the issues that's floating around here
- 10 is the issue about Telegram which we haven't talked about yet.
- Mr. Carson, have you talked to -- have you done
- 12 anything to try and retrieve messages from Telegram from
- 13 Ms. Barbounis's account?
- 14 MR. CARSON: Yeah. We have not been able to retrieve
- 15 any messages. We tried -- it's my understanding that Lisa gave
- 16 all the two-factor authentication to Cornerstone and they
- 17 weren't able to retrieve any of them either. I can double
- 18 check that for you again, but that's what it happened to be.
- 19 THE COURT: Okay. Have you conveyed that to
- 20 Mr. Walton, that that effort was made?
- MR. CARSON: I've had no meaningful conversations with
- 22 the defendants about discovery since the last time we spoke.
- 23 THE COURT: Mr. Walton, do you have any reason to
- 24 think -- I know with some social media accounts, for example,
- 25 there are ways to pull down and download your history.

- 1 Do you have any reason to think that that is feasible,
- 2 that you can scrape the data out of Slack -- out of Telegram?
- 3 MR. WALTON: Yeah. I have to talk to -- I mean, it's
- 4 the first time I'm hearing about the Telegram accounts.
- 5 We have been able to pull them down for our witnesses.
- 6 I would have to talk to Cornerstone to see what the issue is
- 7 and get a better understanding of it.
- 8 THE COURT: I want to get that done. I want to
- 9 understand what they're doing and whether it can be pulled
- 10 down.
- I mean I think, you know, if the issue is, well, you
- 12 have to go through and do screenshots of messages and things
- 13 like that, that seems potentially unreasonable, depending on
- 14 how many messages it is and things like that, you know.
- But if there's a way to scrape the data and put it
- 16 into a review tool or something like that, then it needs to be
- 17 done. And I want that to happen.
- 18 MR. WALTON: Would you like me to connect with
- 19 Cornerstone, Your Honor, and then update the Court by letter?
- THE COURT: Yes. I want you to do that.
- Mr. Carson should be on the call too.
- MR. WALTON: Certainly.
- THE COURT: I want everybody on the same page. I want
- 24 to know what Cornerstone says. And if there's not clarity,
- 25 then I'm going to get Cornerstone on the phone and figure it

- 1 out.
- 2 All right. Let me ask a couple questions, Mr. Walton.
- 3 At this point as you sit here right now, are there
- 4 materials that you need from Ms. Barbounis for The Forum to
- 5 prove its counterclaim?
- And I want to focus on the counterclaim for a minute
- 7 first.
- 8 Or is the material that you would get from
- 9 Ms. Barbounis really to flesh out her defenses?
- MR. WALTON: It's both, Your Honor. I'm sorry for the
- 11 delay. It's a little bit of both. I mean, I think a lot of
- 12 attachments and the multimedia relates to the Tommy
- 13 Robinson/Danny Thomas issues, which of course have crossover
- 14 relating to both to our counterclaim and some of our defenses.
- But it's hard to tell until we get everything. And
- 16 we're still going through that 90,000 -- 90,000 documents that
- 17 we got.
- And I would suspect, if we want to be complete with
- 19 discovery, that we should probably ask for some other search
- 20 terms.
- But in terms of efficiency, I wanted to get what we
- 22 could first, assess it, and then perhaps ask for more search
- 23 terms.
- 24 THE COURT: I mean --
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, just so you know, the search

- 1 terms in the case were Tommy Robinson, Danny Tahoe (ph), The
- 2 Middle East Forum, Daniel Pipe. It's all the same search terms
- 3 that were used in this case.
- 4 THE COURT: I'm not wading into what the search terms
- 5 are. And I will tell you, I mean, again, I understand the
- 6 problems you face, Mr. Walton. I understand why you want more
- 7 search terms and more documents and things like that.
- 8 You know, I look at the timeline, though, in this
- 9 case. And there is an issue, you know, where it took months
- 10 and months and months for The Forum to follow up on its
- 11 discovery requests. And, you know, I don't think that we
- 12 should just reset discovery by starting ESI again with new
- 13 search terms. This case needs to come to a close. And the
- 14 time to do search terms was in June and July and August, it's
- 15 not now at the very end of discovery.
- And if there were problems getting the documents then,
- 17 then the issue should have been brought to my attention then.
- 18 And so that's why I'm hesitant on some of these issues. Okay?
- MR. WALTON: May I respond to that real quickly, Your
- 20 Honor?
- THE COURT: Yep.
- MR. WALTON: In June, July and August, Mr. Carson
- 23 didn't have possession of the materials anymore. My
- 24 understanding is that they were in Cornerstone in an order
- 25 governed by Judge Sanchez.

- 1 THE COURT: That's not my case. And if there was a
- 2 problem, you should have brought it to me then. And if it
- 3 needed coordination with what was going on with Judge Sanchez's
- 4 case, we could have dealt with it then.
- 5 If it was -- you know, but it seems like what happened
- 6 is you basically put the discovery in this case on the back
- 7 burner because of what was going on in the trade secret case.
- 8 And my problem with that is that, you know, I have a
- 9 case that I need to move forward. And, you know, you waited
- 10 until very late in the process. I mean, we're ten months into
- 11 discovery, which is an extraordinarily long time for discovery.
- 12 I don't typically allow that kind of time in discovery in my
- 13 cases. I think they can move faster than that.
- And I'm being told now that, you know, we're basically
- 15 going back to -- I don't know if it's square one, but it's
- 16 square two in terms of the discovery process if we're talking
- 17 about ESI search terms.
- MR. WALTON: Well, I think most of what we got -- most
- 19 of what -- I haven't seen the search terms, but I've heard
- 20 they're broad. So I think most of what we got is what we're
- 21 going to get. We started taking depositions. We've taken
- 22 Ms. Barbounis's deposition all ready. We took Ms. McNulty's
- 23 deposition.
- I hear what Your Honor is saying. We are moving
- 25 forward. I'm not proposing that we go back to square one and

- 1 we start discovery all over. I think in some sense, we're
- 2 going to get what we're going to get, and we need to move
- 3 forward.
- 4 And I agree with that. And we are planning to move
- 5 forward. We have a deposition set for Mr. Roman, Mr. Pipes,
- 6 Mr. Fink, a couple board members. So the case is moving along
- 7 in terms of depositions.
- 8 THE COURT: Right. And I understand that. I mean,
- 9 you know, there's an order that requires them to happen.
- I just -- you know, there's a tension in what you're
- 11 telling me, Mr. Walton, because on the one hand you're saying,
- 12 well, I need to go back and do new search terms. On the other
- 13 hand, you're telling me that you have most of what you think
- 14 you're going to get. You have them in a way that you can
- 15 certainly run your own searches and hone in on the stuff you
- 16 want.
- You know, if there are some gaps in what's being
- 18 provided -- I mean, I am troubled about the media files, that
- 19 that's something that needs to be dealt with. But it doesn't
- 20 sound like there's a lot of other documentary information. I
- 21 mean, maybe there's some Telegram stuff that may or may not be
- 22 recoverable, I just don't know. But otherwise, it just doesn't
- 23 sound like there's a ton of additional material to be given.
- 24 It's really these media files.
- MR. WALTON: It's the media files, Your Honor, and

- 1 also like Mr. Carson was saying earlier, the text messages.
- 2 MR. CARSON: I was about to say that too.
- 3 MR. WALTON: We only have, Your Honor -- I can try to
- 4 use my hand to explain it to you.
- 5 You know how you have a string of text messages --
- 6 THE COURT: Yes.
- 7 MR. WALTON: -- with a bunch of different bubbles?
- 8 THE COURT: Yes.
- 9 MR. WALTON: So we only have the bubble with the hit.
- 10 Nothing above it, nothing below it, just the bubble with the
- 11 hit.
- 12 THE COURT: I don't understand what Cornerstone is
- 13 doing then, because to me, if you're going to produce the text
- 14 messages, you need some sort of threading process in order to
- 15 get that information.
- I would have thought that's a relatively
- 17 straightforward process. Either you get the whole text
- 18 message, or alternatively, they load the text messages into
- 19 this platform and then there's some metadata that indicates the
- 20 relationship so that you can see the thread.
- If that's not what Cornerstone is doing, then they
- 22 need to fix that, because every time I ever looked at text
- 23 messages in my private practice in discovery, that was
- 24 certainly what we did, was we got the threading information and
- 25 we were looking at the text message chains as a whole. So I

- 1 don't understand why they would be doing that.
- 2 MR. WALTON: I think part of it was Judge Sanchez's
- 3 order, because part of the order was they could only produce
- 4 the bubble with the hit, and if you needed context, it was on,
- 5 you know, Mr. Gold or MEF's counsel to ask for more context.
- 6 So when Seth was trying to leverage that production to
- 7 us, I believe that they just turned it over in the same way. I
- 8 don't know why, but I think that originates back with Judge
- 9 Sanchez's order.
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, I've offered to help deal
- 11 with this problem, though, like four times now. I think the
- 12 solution is easy.
- Because there's a lot of text messages, right, that
- 14 are between her and -- they're really personal, private stuff.
- 15 We're talking about hundreds of pages, and the whole thread is
- 16 not relevant.
- So like where there's a hit, I said, let's identify
- 18 the ones that you think you're going to use in the case and
- 19 tell me what they are, and then I'll produce -- I can
- 20 facilitate the production of the context, like 24 hours before
- 21 and after the hit so everyone can see what's being spoken about
- 22 there.
- And I've said that on the record in every deposition
- 24 that has taken place in this case so far. And defendants
- 25 haven't taken me up on that at all. And I put that out there

- 1 again as an option to try to deal with it.
- 2 MR. WALTON: This wasn't raised until our very last
- 3 dep.
- 4 MR. CARSON: You weren't at the other deps. It was
- 5 raised at every deposition so far.
- 6 MR. WALTON: Mr. Gold can speak about that. But they
- 7 haven't been produced. We asked for the text messages --
- 8 MR. CARSON: You haven't asked for them.
- 9 MR. WALTON: Excuse me.
- 10 THE COURT: Okay. I don't want crosstalk. Okay?
- 11 Enough.
- 12 All right. I think I've heard what I need to hear,
- 13 but I'm going to ask you guys all to hold on, because I want to
- 14 take a recess -- actually, I'm reminded, I have one other
- 15 question.
- There was an issue mentioned in the motion about
- 17 redactions of some of what was produced.
- Mr. Carson, I think it was your recent production
- 19 materials were redacted; is that right?
- MR. CARSON: I don't think so, no. I think -- for all
- 21 the redactions that I provided documents for, there was a
- 22 redaction log. It was pretty limited.
- THE COURT: The motion says the production on November
- 24 4th had a lot of redactions.
- Mr. Walton, am I reading correctly?

- 1 MR. CARSON: Your Honor, this is the exact same
- 2 redactions that we dealt with earlier this year, where you
- 3 ordered to us provide a redaction log and to unredact stuff,
- 4 and that's all been done.
- 5 THE COURT: So you're just reproducing stuff on
- 6 November 4th?
- 7 MR. CARSON: No. Like I don't think I redacted
- 8 anything on November -- in the new stuff that I gave them on
- 9 November 4th. Again, I guess maybe ask Dave about it.
- THE COURT: Mr. Walton, were there new redactions on
- 11 the 4th?
- MR. WALTON: Yes.
- MR. CARSON: Where?
- 14 THE COURT: Okay. So let me...
- Mr. Carson, this says that there were 274 documents
- 16 produced on November 4th, including data pulled from Ms.
- 17 Barbounis's Twitter and Instagram accounts, and those documents
- 18 are heavily redacted without explanation.
- So was that stuff that was produced before?
- MR. CARSON: No. I don't even know what they were
- 21 talking about before. I didn't produce anything from Twitter
- 22 accounts, and I didn't redact anything.
- 23 Can they give a Bates stamp number as, like, an
- 24 example?
- MR. WALTON: I think we had some exhibits to our

- 1 motion, Your Honor.
- 2 THE COURT: The motion -- let me see. Because the
- 3 motion --
- 4 MR. WALTON: It's like 90-some pages.
- 5 MR. CARSON: I mean, I can look right now. I'm in
- 6 front of my computer.
- 7 I don't recall redacting anything, and that was a week
- 8 ago.
- 9 MR. WALTON: We definitely have redactions.
- THE COURT: I don't have anything here that's redacted
- 11 in front of me, or at least not -- I see text messages that
- 12 you're sending that you attached. I don't see any redactions.
- So I don't really have any context for this.
- MR. CARSON: I'm looking at it right now, and there's
- 15 no redactions.
- 16 THE COURT: Then you guys may need to work on --
- 17 MR. WALTON: Just -- Your Honor, I can explain just
- 18 quickly.
- When Mr. Carson produces documents, he does it by
- 20 Dropbox. And he'll say -- he'll send us an email. He'll say,
- 21 there's some more documents on Dropbox for you.
- 22 So we got a link from Cornerstone on November 4th with
- 23 no explanation of what it was. And that's the information,
- 24 Seth, that we're talking about on November 4th.
- MR. CARSON: A link from Cornerstone?

- 1 MR. WALTON: Yes.
- 2 MR. CARSON: Again, I mean, instead of filing a motion
- 3 for contempt, maybe --
- 4 THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Carson, I don't want -- I
- 5 understand you're trying to get some information, but I don't
- 6 want argument back and forth between you. This isn't the time
- 7 or the place.
- 8 MR. CARSON: Sorry.
- 9 THE COURT: We're going to take a recess. I'm going
- 10 to turn off my camera and mute myself. You're welcome to do
- 11 the same. I'd like you back in front of your screens by 11:30
- 12 so that we can resume when I'm ready.
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, can I ask you one other
- 14 thing?
- 15 THE COURT: Yes.
- MR. CARSON: In the counterclaim, I served some
- 17 document requests. I don't think I served any interrogatory
- 18 requests, just document requests, asking them to produce
- 19 whatever documents they have that confirms or supports their
- 20 claims alleged in the counterclaim.
- I think the 30-day deadline for that is like two days
- 22 after fact discovery, so I just wanted to -- I think plaintiff
- 23 or counterclaim defendant has a right to review documents if
- 24 they're going to support a counterclaim against her in order to
- 25 make a valid consideration of dispositive motions.

- 1 THE COURT: I'm not sure what you're asking me,
- 2 Mr. Carson. I'm not going to give some legal advice or
- 3 advisory opinion about how you're managing your discovery.
- 4 MR. CARSON: I just -- since the deadline is two days
- 5 after the end of fact discovery, I just wanted to maybe ask
- 6 whether or not, you know, they could have to respond to that,
- 7 those documents.
- 8 THE COURT: I don't have a live dispute in front of me
- 9 right now about that, Mr. Carson. I don't know what their
- 10 position is going to be. I don't have a motion in front of me.
- 11 You guys haven't met and conferred. So it's certainly not a
- 12 ripe issue, so it's not one that I'm prepared to provide an
- 13 answer to.
- 14 MR. CARSON: Understood. Thank you, Your Honor.
- THE COURT: We're going to stand in recess. Be back
- 16 by 11:30. Thanks.
- 17 (Recess at 11:24 a.m. until 11:41 a.m.)
- 18 THE COURT: All right. Here's where I am on this.
- I think that the discovery process in this case has
- 20 been something of a hash. And I think everybody bears some
- 21 responsibility for that, as I've indicated before.
- Mr. Carson, it's not clear to me that what you've been
- 23 doing is fulfilling your discovery obligations in the case.
- I know this is not exactly the normal case for you,
- 25 but you don't seem to be -- you don't seem to understand the

- 1 e-discovery process here. You don't seem to understand the
- 2 platform you're using. And I understand there's some interplay
- 3 with the trade secret case, but, you know, documents are being
- 4 pushed out without review, and it's not clear to me that you
- 5 understand some of the technical implications around all that,
- 6 which is troubling to me.
- 7 I do think, Mr. Carson, that you in significant ways
- 8 ignored my order of October 26th. I didn't get the
- 9 certification that was required. And as you've acknowledged,
- 10 you're not in a position to file that certification.
- 11 That's troubling to me. I think what I tried to
- 12 convey at the last hearing and what the order tried to convey
- 13 is that I expected a fairly herculean effort to get the
- 14 documents out and produced so that discovery could wrap up in
- 15 this case. There was an effort but I don't know there was a
- 16 herculean effort to really kind of just buckle down and get
- 17 everything done.
- In terms of the remedy here, I think, you know, my
- 19 view is somewhat tempered, as I've said before, by the fact
- 20 that some of this is a mess of The Forum's making in terms of
- 21 the pacing of discovery meet and confers. There's something of
- 22 a wait and hurry up approach.
- 23 Again, I know that there's an interplay with the trade
- 24 secret case. I know there's interplay with these other cases.
- 25 But you all made a decision not to coordinate them or ask the

- 1 various judges who had them to coordinate them. And the
- 2 consequences of that were that they had to proceed on parallel
- 3 tracks and not have one take the lead.
- 4 And contempt is at bottom an equitable remedy, and so
- 5 I consider everybody's conduct.
- 6 So here's what I want to do. I am going to take these
- 7 category by category based on what I've heard.
- 8 For the media files that are outstanding, I want a
- 9 report from Cornerstone regarding the number of media files
- 10 that are out on the database. I want that broken down by type
- 11 of file, and I want it categorized in terms of static pictures,
- 12 videos and audio files. I want to see what kind of file
- 13 extensions they are. And I want to -- I want all -- all of you
- 14 are going to talk with Cornerstone to get me that report. I
- 15 want that report by the end of Monday at the latest.
- And I want to know from that report what documents
- 17 have been reviewed and what documents still need to be reviewed
- 18 for production in this case. I'm not interested in the trade
- 19 secret case and whether they've been produced in the trade
- 20 secret case. I want to know what has to be reviewed in this
- 21 case.
- 22 Some of that may get overtaken by a couple of my other
- 23 orders -- by some of the rest of this, but I want that done for
- 24 the media files in case there's standalone media files or media
- 25 files that were attached to emails that have not yet been

- 1 produced, so I want to know that for all media files.
- 2 With respect to the text messages, I want all threads,
- 3 all text conversations in which there has been a hit to be
- 4 produced. I understand that may capture some stuff that's not
- 5 responsive. If there's stuff that needs to be designated
- 6 attorneys' eyes only for confidentiality purposes, that's fine,
- 7 but I want all text threads produced if there's a hit in any of
- 8 them.
- 9 So Mr. Walton, it will probably fall to you in the
- 10 first instance to identify the threads in which there's been a
- 11 hit. I want that given to Mr. Carson. And then the three of
- 12 you can make arrangements with Cornerstone to get the threads
- 13 produced. And it should be produced with whatever metadata is
- 14 necessary to maintain the complete text thread.
- So I'm going to want a report on all of this by the
- 16 end of Monday as to what the status is and when it's going to
- 17 be done. And to the extent any of this can be done by the end
- 18 of Monday, I want to see progress on these materials being
- 19 produced by the end of Monday, because there's not a lot for
- 20 Cornerstone to do in terms of slicing and dicing the
- 21 information they have. A lot of it is going to be pushing it
- 22 out.
- On Telegram, I want you guys to have a conversation
- 24 with Cornerstone. I want all of you to participate in that
- 25 conversation. And I want to know what has been done to date in

- 1 an effort to get the information that's on Telegram. I want to
- 2 know what problems Cornerstone has encountered and whether
- 3 there's any possible solutions to them. And if they're not, if
- 4 they're not retrievable, I want to know that too, but I want to
- 5 know all of it. And I want to know that by the end of Monday.
- 6 With respect to the attachments, for any email that
- 7 has been produced that has an attachment, I think the entire
- 8 family needs to be produced. So that means the email with
- 9 attachments. And you can either -- I think what should happen
- 10 is assuming that Cornerstone can do it, it should push out the
- 11 attachments along with metadata so that the parent-child
- 12 relationship can be maintained and identified.
- If that can't be done, then I guess a second best
- 14 approach would be to reproduce everything with the attachments
- 15 and the metadata, but that's going to require some additional
- 16 work to go back and identify and match up the new production to
- 17 the old documents.
- So if that is what has to happen, if the documents
- 19 have to be pushed out that way with the reproduction, then
- 20 Cornerstone needs to generate a report, which they should be
- 21 able to do from the MD5 hash information in the metadata as to
- 22 where the overlap is in the documents. And that report needs
- 23 to come as well.
- And so I want that information. I want the report by
- 25 Monday as to the process of getting that done. And I want a

- 1 hard deadline as fast as possible. If Cornerstone can do it by
- 2 Monday, I want them to do it.
- 3 So I think that those are the things for Cornerstone
- 4 for you guys to deal with. Most of them require you to deal
- 5 with Cornerstone and come back with a couple of things. I
- 6 pretty strongly recommend that when we hang up here or
- 7 disconnect here, that you guys reach out to Cornerstone and try
- 8 to set up a call today because I don't want to hear that you
- 9 tried to get them on Monday and you couldn't be available until
- 10 Tuesday and so forth and so on. I want that process moving
- 11 so that --
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, I'm going to be in a
- 13 deposition for the rest of the day today. I'm in one now.
- 14 THE COURT: Then, Mr. Carson, you're going to have to
- 15 find a way to take a break from that and at least reach out to
- 16 Cornerstone. I'm sorry, but I want answers to this by the end
- 17 of Monday.
- MR. WALTON: We can reach out to Cornerstone and keep
- 19 you posted, Mr. Carson.
- MR. CARSON: I can't do it today. I mean, I took a
- 21 huge break today for this.
- 22 THE COURT: I'm not interested in hearing "I can't do
- 23 it, "Mr. Carson. Okay? I mean, a deposition is something that
- 24 has some flexibility to it. A court order is not. So unless
- 25 that deposition is taking place pursuant to a specific court

- 1 order that you can send me that shows me that you have no
- 2 flexibility, then you're going to have to work around my court
- 3 order.
- 4 I'm not asking you to spend the rest of your day on
- 5 this, but I am asking you to find time to talk to Cornerstone,
- 6 whether it is after the end of the deposition, whether it is
- 7 another half hour break from the deposition, I don't know, but
- 8 you're going to do this.
- 9 And then the other issue that's out there is the
- 10 redaction issue. You know, I can't tell from the arguments
- 11 what was redacted. I don't have examples. I don't have a log.
- 12 I think you all need to meet and confer. And again, I want
- 13 that in your report to me on Monday.
- I want to know what you've discussed. I want to know
- 15 what the answers are. If there were redactions in documents
- 16 that were produced on November 4th, then, Mr. Walton, identify
- 17 some of those to Mr. Carson by way of example so he can see
- 18 what they are. Mr. Carson, give them an explanation as to the
- 19 basis for the redactions. And if there's a log that needs to
- 20 be done as to the redactions, I want to know that too. And I
- 21 want all that done by Monday.
- I want all of this, the status report by Monday. I
- 23 want it filed as a status report on the docket. I don't just
- 24 want a letter. So I want all that done.
- 25 And then the last thing, as far as this goes, as I

- 1 said at the outset here, I do think some of this, there was a
- 2 delay in dealing with discovery through this case, but a lot of
- 3 where we are now is a function of I think a combination of
- 4 Mr. Carson not really grasping or fulfilling discovery
- 5 obligations, including obligations that have come -- you know,
- 6 have been suggested from the ABA that everybody be technically
- 7 facile in this day and age, coupled with not following my
- 8 October 26th order.
- 9 So the last two things then that I'm going to want to
- 10 do is this.
- Mr. Carson, I'm going to order you to pay the fees
- 12 that were incurred for them to prepare this motion.
- And so today's the 13th. So Mr. Walton, I'll give you
- 14 till next Friday, the 20th, to put in a fee petition. And
- 15 then, Mr. Carson, you can look at the fee petition and respond
- 16 to it by -- let's say by -- I know Thanksgiving comes in there,
- 17 so --
- 18 Respond to it by the 11th, Mr. Carson.
- And the fees go to preparing the motion and for this
- 20 hearing.
- And then the last thing, Mr. Carson, once I get that
- 22 report from Cornerstone about the files that are -- the media
- 23 files that are out there. And, you know, it may be that
- 24 there's not that many left to review once the attachments are
- 25 all produced per my order, but to the extent that there are

- 1 still media files that need to be produced, I want to see daily
- 2 updates on the progress of that. And I want those by email to
- 3 my chambers.
- 4 So I'm going to get a report from you on Monday about
- 5 what's out there.
- 6 Hopefully what you can tell me is both what's out
- 7 there in the way of media files but also how many of them are
- 8 attachments that are going to be produced and what that's going
- 9 to lead for review.
- MR. CARSON: How am I going to get you that
- 11 information?
- 12 THE COURT: You're going to email me to the Chambers
- 13 account, Mr. Carson, you're going to copy counsel in the case
- 14 how many files you've reviewed on a daily basis so that I have
- 15 information about the progress that's being made. I want to
- 16 know the files that have been reviewed and the amount of time
- 17 that's spent reviewing them on a daily basis. And you're going
- 18 to send emails to my Chambers account telling me that.
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, if everything was produced, I
- 20 have to pay for them to file a motion when every possible thing
- 21 in the case was already produced?
- THE COURT: Mr. Carson, you're paying for them to file
- 23 a motion because it's clear to me that not everything is -- or
- 24 if everything has been produced, it's by blind luck.
- MR. CARSON: No, it's not by blind luck. It's by all

- 1 the work that I've done in the case.
- 2 THE COURT: You'd better be really careful. This is
- 3 not the time you want to be arguing with me and snippy with me
- 4 about this, Mr. Carson. I'm going to tell you right now that
- 5 you conceded earlier on the record that you can't file a
- 6 certification right now that you're in compliance with my order
- 7 of October 26th because you haven't reviewed all the media
- 8 files. You don't know what's in those media files, so you
- 9 can't sit here and tell me that you know definitively that all
- 10 responsive materials have been produced.
- MR. CARSON: Right.
- 12 THE COURT: Okay? So that's why I'm ordering a fee
- 13 award. You haven't complied with my order.
- And so, you know, I don't know what else is out there.
- 15 I don't know about the email attachments, but it seems to me
- 16 that those are things that need to be dealt with in the course
- 17 of discovery ordinarily in any case with a heavy e-discovery
- 18 load. And it just hasn't been handled correctly here.
- Okay. So that's -- we'll get you an order that, you
- 20 know, lays some of this out, but it's just going to refer back
- 21 to what's on the record. So to the extent there's questions, I
- 22 am going to recommend someone order the transcript so you have
- 23 it, because it will lay out a lot of my reasoning. But we'll
- 24 get you an order as well onto the docket.
- 25 So I'll look forward to your report.

- 1 As I said, I recommend that you try to get a hold of
- 2 Cornerstone, at least start the conversation today.
- All right? And with that, we're going to stand
- 4 adjourned.
- 5 MR. CARSON: Your Honor, I have another question.
- 6 THE COURT: Yes.
- 7 MR. CARSON: So you ordered every text thread has to
- 8 be produced. That's basically every text she's ever sent.
- 9 I mean, that's totally overly broad, unduly
- 10 burdensome, not calculated to lead to the discovery of
- 11 admissible evidence, it's not proportional to the case. Every
- 12 single communication she ever sent has a hit of some sort. So
- 13 you're basically saying for the last five years of her life,
- 14 she has to turn over every communication she's ever sent, with
- 15 anyone, including me, including her husband, including doctors,
- 16 including friends, including family. That's just not fair. It
- 17 makes no sense.
- 18 THE COURT: Mr. Carson, I'm doing it because there
- 19 doesn't seem to have been a process to review. There doesn't
- 20 seem to have been a sound e-discovery process in place in this
- 21 case, so I think objections have been waived. If there were
- 22 privilege issues, I assume that they were logged.
- MR. CARSON: I've been objecting on the record the
- 24 entire time.
- 25 THE COURT: I assume that, for instance,

- 1 communications between you and Ms. Barbounis have been logged.
- 2 If there are hits between you and Ms. Barbounis, then yes, you
- 3 don't have to produce those, but you do have produce a
- 4 privilege log about them. Okay?
- 5 Beyond that, it seems to me that the objections as to
- 6 burden and things like are long since waived.
- 7 MR. CARSON: I've been making them the entire time.
- 8 THE COURT: Well, we're at a point, Mr. Carson, that
- 9 we're -- having not complied with your obligations, regardless
- 10 of whether you voiced the objection, having not complied with
- 11 your obligations, I'm deeming them waived. Okay?
- MR. CARSON: They weren't waived.
- 13 THE COURT: Or I'm overruling them, whichever verbiage
- 14 you want to use.
- But we're at a point where at the end of the case,
- 16 this should have been dealt with. And I'm ordering them
- 17 produced.
- 18 MR. CARSON: I'm going to file a motion for
- 19 reconsideration. I'll lay out my argument in that then. But I
- 20 don't think that they should be produced until the issues are
- 21 briefed, because it's not -- I mean, what you're ordering is a
- 22 total intrusion into her personal and private life that has no
- 23 relevance to this case. And it's what they've been after the
- 24 entire time, since the beginning.
- I mean, plus, I think there's issues of res judicata

- 1 or claim preclusion where Judge Sanchez already ordered that
- 2 that stuff shouldn't be produced in the case.
- 3 THE COURT: We, Mr. Carson, I don't want to hear claim
- 4 preclusion and res judicata. That doesn't apply. There are
- 5 two different cases with different scopes of discovery and
- 6 different discovery paths. Okay?
- I mean, if you want to seek reconsideration, you can.
- 8 I'm going to rule on it very quickly, because I want this dealt
- 9 with. And my practices and procedures don't require responses
- 10 to reconsideration. So if you want to do it, do it quickly,
- 11 because my obligation is still outstanding. And if you run
- 12 afoul of it, I'm going to be really unhappy.
- Okay? So my order stands. If you're going to seek
- 14 reconsideration, you can. I'll look at it quickly. I'll rule
- 15 on it. But you're going to have to have a really good reason
- 16 to explain to me not just that it's burdensome, not just that
- 17 it's intrusive, but you're going to have to explain to me what
- 18 you did to fulfill your discovery obligations in this case
- 19 through an evaluation of metadata and email threading or text
- 20 threading in order to produce stuff with context.
- MR. CARSON: Your Honor, we produced every single text
- 22 that was sent between all the relevant parties in this case.
- 23 All right? And then we got every single one of her devices,
- 24 social media accounts, email accounts, private storage
- 25 accounts, imaged. And then we made an argument to produce all

- 1 the information in those accounts based on keywords.
- 2 THE COURT: Did you make that agreement in this case,
- 3 Mr. Carson?
- 4 MR. CARSON: Yes.
- 5 MR. WALTON: No.
- 6 THE COURT: You made that agreement with Mr. Walton?
- 7 MR. CARSON: Yes.
- 8 MR. WALTON: No.
- 9 THE COURT: You better show me the agreement in
- 10 writing.
- MR. CARSON: I mean, we referenced the agreement in
- 12 the hearing, the last hearing, so I guess I'll get a transcript
- 13 of the hearing to do that too.
- 14 THE COURT: My order stands. Okay? I'm not going to
- 15 revisit what I've ordered. That's not my recollection of the
- 16 last hearing. I have the transcript, I'll take a look at it,
- 17 but that's certainly not my recollection.
- If you're going to move for reconsideration, you can,
- 19 but my order stands.
- MR. CARSON: Dave Walton and I have a lot of emails
- 21 back and forth where we discussed that we would produce the
- 22 information in this way.
- 23 THE COURT: Okay. Well, I don't know what the emails
- 24 say, Mr. Carson. If you think that -- if you think you've been
- 25 compliant with your discovery obligations, you can try to show

- 1 me, but it sure doesn't look it to me. Based on the
- 2 conversation I've had earlier today, I don't have any
- 3 confidence that you really know what's been produced in this
- case or you've done it in a way that is forensically sound and
- 5 consistent with your ESI obligation.
- 6 And so my order stands. I expect you to comply with
- 7 it. You can move for reconsideration if you want to. If you
- 8 get it in in time, I'll look at it quickly and we'll see where
- 9 it stands. Okay? I mean, I'm always hoping to be persuaded,
- 10 but, you know, you need to continue to proceed as though my
- 11 order is in place until it's not. Okay?
- 12 MR. CARSON: Okay.
- 13 THE COURT: All right. We'll stand
- 14 adjourned. Thank you.
- 15 (Proceedings concluded at 12:02 p.m.)

17

16

- 18 I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript
- 19 from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

20

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- 22 Ann Marie Mitchell, CRR, RDR, RMR Official Court Reporter

14th day of November, 2020 24

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